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Retour en Classe

Renée Garneau, a 53 year old Québécoise writer, describes her experience at returning to school after many years away. She talks of her classes in Women's Studies and her aspirations to continue learning.

Etaient-ils donc déjà si loin que ça ces jours de mon enfance? Si éloigné, ce persistant relent du cèdre de mes crayons tout neufs, du caoutchouc de la gomme à effacer? Oblitérées, les couleurs bigarées des bouliers compteurs? Pourtant, il était si présent encore le tanin brunâtre du cuir tout neuf de mon sac d'écolière; autrefois, je me soulais à cette bonne odeur, aux jours des retours en classe, en septembre! Ces souvenirs font pourtant encore flotter autour de mes narines cette nostalgie des jours de rentrées des années 30'. Il suffit que je les évoque pour que renaisse la mémoire des sens, qu'un seul rappel fasse reprendre vie à ces jours plutôt heureux. Inutile pourtant de les faire ressusciter puisque pour ce nouveau retour en classe, au mois de janvier '79, je réalise que le toc des temps modernes avait bel et bien remplacé l'authenticité des matériaux de mes temps reculés. J'avais, ce jour-là, sous le bras un porte-document en faux daim et, dedans, des crayons billes en plastique qui déformeraient hélàs, mon écriture jusqu'à la rendre illisible.

C'est au local 1070, de Sir Georges Williams, à Concordia, rue de Maison-neuve, que je fus ramenée à ma réalité. J'avais maintenant à forcer toute mon attention pour comprendre ce que l'on dirait à l'avant, en anglais. A quoi m'aurait servi toutes mes démarches si je n'essayais pas d'en tirer le meilleur parti possible? J'avais si longtemps combattu avec moi-même à savoir si oui ou non, un diplôme m'importait. Trop de tergiversations n'ont jamais rapporté ni résultats ni certificats. J'avais donc fini par opter pour le diplôme et la fréquentation de l'université.

Savais-je bien ce que tout cela représenterait d'efforts? N'aurais-je pas encore une fois été prête à tout, comme une jeune mariée antique se jetant résolument dans le mariage, ignorant que son



The Simone de Beauvoir Institute's building on the downtown campus (Bishop Street).

quotidien ne lui appartiendrait jamais plus...?

Un retour en classe que l'on fait à 53 ans n'est sans doute jamais banal, ça n'est jamais banal du tout. Ça vous sort du lit tôt le matin et ne vous y retourne que tard le soir. Entre deux cours, il faudra lire! En tout ignorance, en m'engageant, j'avais juré de lire, non plus selon mes caprices habituels, mais dans un ordre et selon des exigences de la matière qu'il faudrait absorber. Finies donc les flâneries, la vie et la lecture en dilettante, mon cerveau, depuis ce jour, aurait maintenant à se plier aux exigences de mes trois professeurs: R. Belkin, pour la littérature, Christine Allen et Greta Nemiroff pour: Une approche Contemporaine de l'Image et de l'Identité de la Femme. En littérature, je ferais la connaissance de Margaret Atwood, de Margaret Lawrence, de Doris Lessing, de Tillie Olsen et, j'approfondirais Virginia Woolf. L'Image et l'Identité de la Femme me ferait jongler entre Freud, Mill, Engels, de Beauvoir, Wollstonecraft, et autres

Women's Studies

Women and the Law

En discutant de son cours sur La Femme et la Loi, Susan Altschul présente un brève vue d'ensemble sur l'histoire du statut légal des femmes depuis l'antiquité, en prêtant une attention particulière à la façon dont les lois, issues du système de la propriété privée, ont affecté les femmes. Le cours examine les lois actuelles affectant les femmes dans la société occidentale et observe leurs effets.

Teaching a subject called "Women and the Law" is a lot like writing the history of western civilization on a postcard. Since laws affect all societies, and all societies affect women, it's not a subject that can be neatly defined or quickly exhausted. After many years of fighting the usual battles personally and ten years spent studying the women's movement as both a journalist and a lawyer, I am excited about the chance to pull it all together in the form of a Political Science course at Concordia.

No one can study women's legal status through the ages without becoming aware that we are one of the world's oldest oppressed minorities. When private property became the accepted economic base of society, the owners of private property had to have clearly-defined heirs to pass it on to—they had to be sure who their children were. That led to an ideal of monogamous conduct for wives, accompanied by the notion that women (or at least their reproductive organs) were also the private property of individual men.

We see women treated as property and not "persons" in the very earliest legal systems. They could be bought, traded or sold by fathers or husbands. If they were abandoned by a suitor their guardians could sue for breach of contract. If they were raped their guardians could claim restitution of the "bride's price" traditionally paid for virgins. They could exercise no civil rights on their own. Their legal status was that of non-persons. As recently as 1928 in this country the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that women could not be appointed to the Senate

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nombreux auteurs en rapport avec la condition féminine.

De Beauvoir était évidemment "A Must" au sein d'un Institut qui portait son nom, mais de maître Freud, j'assisterais à la presque démolition. Trop longtemps avait-il, hélas, présidé tout près des divans des psychiatres au maintien éhonté d'un système capitaliste boiteux tel qu'il existait encore. Trouver des méthodes pour réformer ce système et faire en sorte que la femme puisse y évoluer malgré qu'elle ait dépassé l'âge de trente ans. Prouver à Freud, faire retourner son cadavre maintenant desséché, dans sa tombe, prouver dis-je que je ne suis ni "une parasite, ni une tête de linotte, ni une bonne femme", j'étais prête à ça.

Grâce à Mair Verthuy, et grâce à ces femmes professeurs, j'ai découvert une nouvelle raison de vivre, et ma nécessité d'être dans une société à qui j'ai donné trois enfants. J'ai aussi appris à être moi-même, à ne pas accepter une vérité pour ce que l'on m'en disait, mais à vérifier pour trouver et cause et raisons aux malaises de l'humanité. J'ai appris communiquer avec des femmes de tous âges, je me suis fait de bonnes amies parmi toute la gamme des âges. J'ai de plus appris à développer un système d'auto-défense psychologique et une nouvelle conscience politique et sociale.

Je vais, en septembre, continuer de fréquenter Concordia, mais je ne serais plus jamais la même personne, j'aurais encore vieilli, mais que m'importe maintenant cet âge? J'ai maintenant d'ailleurs le sentiment d'être sans âge, et pourquoi pas? . . .

Renée Garneau

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because they were not included in the list of "qualified persons" required for such office (this decision was reversed by the British Privy Council in October 1929, and we do now in fact have women senators). A few years earlier, Emily Howard Stowe was being denied access to the medical profession and Clara Brett Martin to the legal profession. Martha Hamm Lewis was allowed to attend normal school in New Brunswick in 1849 only if she entered late, left early, wore a veil and never spoke to the other students. These and other stories of individual courage are not in the statute books, but one does not have to dig very far to find them.

Women's struggle for equality has been waged very often against the expressed desires of women themselves, women who preferred to be pampered and privileged and were not ready to shoulder equal responsibility. Those in the anti-Equal Rights movement in the United States today seem to

want us all back in the kitchen keeping apple pie safe for democracy. In times of high unemployment women are the first to be forced out of the labour force. We are seeing legislative changes now which will make it easier for them to stay home, coupled with a renewed emphasis on the traumas suffered by children who have working mothers.

A course on law, unfortunately, cannot go too deeply into the theoretical and sociological bases of society. We have time only to examine the actual laws affecting women in Canada, the United States and Europe today and to observe their effects.

In the first term we study family law in order to define women's position within the family. Married women, together with infants and lunatics, were not legal persons in English law until the 1880s; in Quebec it took until 1964. We examine property-sharing arrangements that occur within marriage, and the rights or otherwise of non-married couples. We look at marriage contracts, divorce, adoption, illegitimate children and many other things people need to know about the law but often do not.

In the second term we study laws affecting

women outside the home: laws concerning discrimination in employment, equal pay, pensions, taxes, maternity leave, etc. We look at the Human Rights Commissions in Canada and deplore their lack of teeth. We turn then to criminal laws affecting women, particularly with regard to abortion, rape, prostitution and birth control. Each student is asked to research one of these second-term topics and to present it in class. We are consistently finding that while laws may be amended, the people who administer them (such as bank managers or hospital administrators) are not keeping up with the changes. Women are still being asked for the signature of a "responsible male" before taking a loan or signing a lease. Wives are still given credit ratings based on their husband's earnings, and employers still feel free to ask a woman "Are you on the Pill?" before hiring her.

No one ever changed society by sitting in a classroom, but if courses like this one get enough people thinking, talking, writing, lobbying and demonstrating, then real change can happen. For me, that's why we're here.

Susan Altschul

Death's Mind—and Mine

I awoke with a start—and immediate fear, and a sense of not being alone anymore. My heart beat fast, and I knew—I knew, that DEATH'S MIND and MINE were severely in tune.

I lay very still, as the fear grew and grew, in thundering silence—my heart breathing still. Down at my feet an image appeared. The image of DEATH—cold, clawing and real.

I steeled myself, and my mind said to him. "Get away from me—I'm not ready for you. I've got living to do and a child who needs. Get back where you belong—I'm not coming with you."

MY heart was crashing with an awesome fear, as his cold clammy image came ever more near. My mind SCREAMED again—"I'm not afraid of you. You can't FRIGHTEN ME into coming with you."

This time MY MIND reached HIS, with my will, and he slowly drew back, and faded down-hill. My breathing eased gradually, as I lay quietly still, so proud that MY MIND had been stronger than his WILL.

Madeleine Pallemerts

The author has written of herself:

"The last four years of living with cancer, produced in a forty-six year old English born woman, an intense desire to write songs and poetry on all aspects of the illness. I am strongly committed to the physical and emotional well-being of other women with cancer."

This Newsletter will consider for publication the submission of unsolicited articles and information.

Envoyez au Bulletin vos articles ou tous renseignements que vous jugerez utiles.

Editorial Committee for this issue / Comité de rédaction de ce numéro:

Frances Bauer, Alison Hall, Dana Hearne, Greta Nemiroff, Marion Patterson.

We are greatly indebted to Jean-Paul Baril and Liliane Pollak for translation.

This autumn, we at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute will be embarking on our second year. While the accumulated memories of our crowded first year might be very positive, we still owe ourselves the honour of a serious "prise de conscience". Indeed, in retrospect it is often difficult to pinpoint that first year. What actually went on? Have we been adequately informed of these needs? Have we given enough time to planning our priorities? These questions and more tend to haunt some of us as we pause to reflect on this past arduous and also fulfilling year.

We had a difficult task in getting the Institute off the ground, in creating something valid where before there was nothing. Much energy was expended on the rather mundane task of setting up those systems and mechanisms necessary for our day-to-day activities—not to speak of our long-range survival. We developed an elaborate committee system predicated on providing our membership with maximum participation in the decision-making process. This particular set of structures will be re-evaluated at our membership meeting of June 20. We must judge the efficacy of our *modus operandi* and create appropriate changes. The underlying issue here is whether or not participatory democracy is desirable, workable or even worthwhile to us in our particular situation.

There are many issues for us to address. The Institute was set up in part as a place that would be conducive to the initiation of projects concerning women in and outside the university context. Are we fulfilling this role? Do we provide adequate initiative, support and leadership to our community? To be sure, we can look back with pride upon our many informative visiting speakers, our varied day-long workshops, our Dialogues in Depth, and those moments of shared relaxation at parties and gatherings. Yet we must also ask ourselves if we have provided a forum for significant debate and discourse. Were we receptive to argumentation on seemingly polarized differences of view? Or did we regard ourselves somehow as too fragile yet for overt dissension? Have we steered an excessively safe course in this election year, when there are serious issues of oppression facing women in Canada?

We have many questions to reflect upon at the close of our exuberant first year. In a world rapidly moving towards extreme conservatism, we must summon the courage to address vital issues facing women and to encourage open and even heated debate. In our planning, let us move in the direction of greater confidence in ourselves and each other; this should result in the dynamic kind of confrontation which can produce solutions.

Greta Nemiroff

Cet automne, l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir entreprend sa deuxième année. Même si cette première année s'est avérée très mouvementée, et que les souvenirs que nous en avons soient de plus positifs, nous pouvons nous permettre une sérieuse prise de conscience. Il est difficile en effet de faire le point sur cette première année. De tout ce qui s'est passé, quoi garder, quoi écarter? Avons-nous répondu aux attentes et aux besoins de nos membres? Y avons-nous fait assez attention? Avons-nous mis le temps qu'il fallait à établir nos priorités? Voilà les questions qui nous hantent à la fin de cette dure mais combien exaltante année.

La tâche de faire démarrer l'Institut n'a pas été une mince affaire: créer à partir de rien quelque chose de valable. Nous avons déployé beaucoup d'énergie à mettre sur pied les mécanismes de notre activité quotidienne, sans parler de nos problèmes de survie. Nous avons élaboré un système de comités qui a favorisé une participation maximale de nos membres aux prises de décision. Nous ferons une évaluation de ces structures lors de l'Assemblée générale du 20 juin. Nous devons porter un jugement sur notre mode d'opération et instaurer les changements appropriés. Le problème qui se pose à nous est fondamental: la participation démocratique est-elle désirable? est-elle pratique? est-elle même valable dans le cadre où nous travaillons?

Un grand nombre de questions se pose à nous. Dans notre esprit, l'Institut devait être un lien où naîtraient des projets, à la fois dans le cadre de l'Université et en dehors. Remplissons-nous ce rôle? Offrons-nous l'appui, le leadership dont a besoin notre communauté? Assurément, nous sommes fières de nos conférenciers invités, qui nous ont tant apporté de nos ateliers et de nos "Dialogues en profondeur". Que dire de ces moments de détente, lors de nos rencontres et de nos parties? Pourtant, nous devons nous poser la question. Avons-nous pu provoquer les débats et les discussions qui s'imposaient? Avons-nous assez bien reçu le débat entre des points de vue qui semblaient irréconciliables? Ou encore nous sommes-nous perçues comme trop frêles pour encourager la confrontation? Nous sommes-nous assez engagées pendant cette année d'élections où les femmes font encore face, au Canada, à de sérieux problèmes d'oppression?

Nous avons encore un grand nombre de points qui se posent à nous, à la fin de notre trépidante année. Alors que notre monde se dirige vers le conservatisme le plus extrême, nous devons avoir le courage d'aborder les problèmes fondamentaux qui se présentent aux femmes et d'encourager la discussion franche, voire passionnée. Que notre projet nous apporte une plus grande confiance envers nous-mêmes, ainsi que les uns envers les autres: le débat dynamique qui s'ensuivra produira les solutions désirées.

Greta Nemiroff

Women's Studies in the Anglophone CEGEPs

On offre actuellement dans tous les CEGEPs anglais du Québec des cours d'Études féminines. Cet article en présente quelques-uns: leur contenu et leur orientation.

Over the last few years, more and more courses that focus on women, and are taught from a feminist perspective have been introduced at the CEGEP level.

There are several advantages to introducing Women's Studies in the CEGEPs. Most college students are at a developmental stage where they are involved in seeking and defining a sexual, personal, and vocational identity. It is a time when such questions as who am I? how do I become a woman (or a man)? where am I going? are most pressing. Furthermore, a significant number of CEGEP students are enrolled in three year, terminal, career programs. These students are not likely to enter university, where they might be exposed to Women's Studies.

In the CEGEP curriculum, Women's Studies does not yet constitute a program or a field of concentration. Students are free to take one or several courses. Social Science students have the greatest flexibility. They can take courses in Women's Studies which are offered in

Social Science disciplines as part of their concentration, or in complementary courses (usually multi-disciplinary) or in the English or Humanities core. Students in Science can take Women's Studies in complementary and core courses, whereas students in career programs can select from the courses offered by the English and Humanities core.

The existence of these courses has come about through the interest of faculty members, stimulated by student response. At both campuses of Vanier, interested faculty have banded together to form committees devoted to the further development of Women's Studies. Clusters of courses have been organized. At the Snowdon Campus, for example, there are five courses relating directly to the role and position of women in western society. Related courses in Sociology of the Family and Sexuality are also offered and the college has recently approved a course on the Economic Role of Women. It has been the aim of Snowdon's Women's Studies Committee to make these courses available to students in as many different programs as possible. They naturally appeal mainly to women students, but individual classes have had up to 60% men enrolled.

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Interview with Kathy Waters

Katherine Waters, Directrice-associée de l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir, parle de sa vie et de son travail et nous dit comment elle voit l'Institut. La première femme à être engagée à Loyola, elle décrit ses premières années ainsi que l'évolution des Etudes de la Femme dans cet établissement.

There is an engaging softness about Katherine Waters as she settles down to talk. It is in her eyes, in her expressive face framed by dark hair and in her easy laughter. She is the relaxed and stylish mother of Juliet and Chippy, absorbed in conversation about a novel she's read and is discussing with humorous lucidity. As she begins to tell the story of her career, her softness takes form and shape as years of hard work, political activism and achievement are revealed.

Katherine is Associate Principal of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute and Associate Professor of English at Loyola. She is also the first woman ever hired by that institution which, until the early 1960s was an all-male bastion of Catholic, Jesuit and private education.

Describing herself as "...a classic product of the seven-petticoat fifties," this native Montrealer grew up in a world which gave her little to rebel against, though her conventional background was unconventional in one respect. "I had a Catholic mother and a Presbyterian father, and felt I had a foot in both worlds," she remembers. She agreed that growing up in an environment which is accepting of differences helped her to be sympathetic in that way and perhaps to develop political acumen as well. From her convent school where her friends remember her as one who asked many questions, she went into an honours English program at McGill. Her parents were determined that her older brother should have the finest education possible and also encouraged her, she supposes, because she did well in school.

Her friends at McGill were of two groups, conventional WASPs like those who belonged to the sorority which she joined there, and the "critical, satirical and ironic ones who mostly hung about at the McGill Daily." This group, which she followed after the McGill years to England and two years of study at Oxford, influenced her most.

She loved Oxford. It was there where she remembers experiencing her first real sense of freedom and where she began to bloom. On a Quebec scholarship, she followed her honours program in modern British literature and poetry. She began as well to take responsibility in her personal life "...having my own place, working through conflicts

with people, being totally on my own for the first time. It was probably a triumph to survive in the fifties without getting into a conventional early marriage with a conventional person," she says, recalling those days.

Since she hoped eventually to be able to have some input into the English literature curriculum for Quebec high schools, she enrolled at St. Joseph's Teachers' College upon her return home. Short of money, she applied "...humbly, just to correct papers" to both Sir George and Loyola campuses and was astonished to be offered teaching jobs at both places. She accepted both, which meant teaching two courses at each campus while at the same time being a full-time student. "I'll never forget that time in my life," she says, "I was 22 years old and lost 35 pounds in one year. I didn't have time to eat!"

There followed a year spent teaching at Carleton in Ottawa, then she returned to Loyola where things were expanding and changing very rapidly. "Loyola was still technically a collège classique, but with expansion they brought in an honours

program, people with different backgrounds and all sorts of specialists. I was the first women they ever had on this campus," she says, adding with a twinkle, "and that was kind of interesting."

At about the same time she married her husband David, a former teacher at Loyola who is now a producer at CBMT. They have two children, Juliet and James (Chippy). It was Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*, she claims, that soon after the birth of their first child "... completely raised my consciousness." There I was in the early sixties not only with a full-time job and an infant, but very active in all phases of my work; I was on committees and involved in lots of politics. It wasn't all that usual in my particular milieu to be working full time with a very young child, and here was somebody telling me I shouldn't feel guilty, that it is society and its expectations that are wrong! I also got involved politically with the NDP at that time. It's one of the parties that doesn't seem to sex-stereotype, and that kind of activity sets up a kind of optimism. I started

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Prisoners of Convention: Ibsen's Other Women

Roslyn Belkin is Associate Professor in the Department of English at Concordia and a Tutor of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. She currently teaches two undergraduate courses and two graduate courses on Women in Literature, and was, in fact instrumental in introducing women's courses to the English Department. At the moment she is writing a book on women in the work of four major dramatists—Ibsen, Strindberg, Brecht and Williams. The following piece is an outline of her chapter on Ibsen which will appear in the Spring issue of *The Journal of Women's Studies in Literature*.

Roslyn Belkin est Professeur-associé au Département d'anglais à l'Université Concordia et Conseillère à l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir. Elle donne actuellement deux cours du premier cycle (undergraduate) et deux cours d'études supérieures (graduate) sur Les Femmes en Littérature et a, en fait, contribué à l'introduction des cours sur la femme au Département d'anglais. En ce moment, elle écrit un livre sur les femmes dans les oeuvres de quatre grands dramaturges—Ibsen, Strindberg, Brecht et Williams. L'extrait suivant est un exposé de son chapitre sur Ibsen qui sera publié dans le numéro du printemps du *The Journal of Women's Studies in Literature*.

Henrik Ibsen's professed belief that, for him, personal liberty was the highest value found its artistic expression in the creation of a series of male heroes, who, in various ways, assert their individuality in defiance of social, religious, or artistic conventions. However, in his formidable body of work (25 plays in all) only one woman, Nora Helmer in *A Doll's House* can be included (albeit with reservations) in his select group of freedom-fighters. Despite Ibsen's profound understanding of the ways in which society oppresses women, all his women but Nora are convention-bound, seeking to fulfill themselves exclusively through others, as self-sacrificing wives, as assistants to male artists, or as real or surrogate mothers. Female rebels like Hedda Gabler and Rebecca West, so-called "emancipated women," never struggle for independence, only for some sort of power over their men. Whereas Ibsen's individualist heroes are leaders, always in the forefront in the fight for progress, his women are, invariably, followers, associated with "the other," Ibsen's "compact majority," who cling, at all costs, to outworn societal mores. Moreover, Ibsen's firm conviction that motherhood was the only proper "vocation" (his word) for women, suggests that in arguing for the value of personal freedom as opposed to any kind of constricting convention, Ibsen was thinking primarily of men.

From Roslyn Belkin, "Prisoners of Convention: Ibsen's 'Other Women'", *The Journal of Women's Studies in Literature*, Spring, 1979.

Sociology of Women at Concordia

La Sociologie de la Femme à Concordia

In the Department of Sociology at Concordia, four major courses are being offered which deal specifically with women and society.

This year the **Sociology of the Family** course has been taught by Roberta Hamilton, author of **The Liberation of Women: A Study of Patriarchy and Capitalism**. In her course she moves from a discussion of the origins of the family to look at the beginnings of the western family and the changes wrought by the transition from feudalism to capitalism. She then looks at religion as a manifestation of patriarchal ideology, and finally examines the contemporary family from several theoretical perspectives i.e. the traditional functionalist approach of sociology, and the more radical Marxist and feminist perspectives. In Hamilton's view, using these different perspectives enables one to ask different sets of questions of given data. Omitting to use the more radical perspectives paralyzes inquiry. Her own major interest right now involves a study of the relationship between the Church, the State and the Family in Quebec.

Susan Russell, whose PhD thesis was the study of sex-role socialization in an academic high school in Ottawa, teaches a course on the **Sociology of Sex Roles**. While her course draws from cross-cultural, historical and contemporary empirical research, particular attention is paid to Marxist, feminist, and socialist-feminist theoretical perspectives on the patriarchal nature of society. Russell tries to assess the value of the different perspectives in terms of their effectiveness in explaining the sociology of sex roles. Clearly, the conservative view that things have to be the way they are is not at all helpful; and the liberal view which ignores questions of class conflict, and conflict between men and women, and estimates that things are getting better all the time, has very little fundamental value either. What then of the more radical approaches? Russell faults the feminist perspective for citing the reproductive system as the major cause of women's oppression, since, in her view, this need no longer be the case. She faults the Marxist perspective for failing to take into account many aspects of the power differential between men and women and further recognizes the major flaw of an analysis where sexuality is seen from the vantage point of male dominance. For her, the best tool for analysis would be aspects

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Le Département de Sociologie de l'Université Concordia offre quatre cours majeurs qui traitent particulièrement de la femme et de la société.

Cette année, le cours de Sociologie de la Famille a été donné par Roberta Hamilton, auteur de **The Liberation of Women: A Study of Patriarchy and Capitalism**. Dans son cours, Roberta Hamilton propose une discussion sur les origines de la famille occidentale et les changements opérés par le passage du féodalisme au capitalisme. Puis elle étudie la religion comme manifestation d'idéologie patriarcale et finalement, elle examine la famille contemporaine de différents points de vue théoriques, c'est à dire qu'elle aborde la sociologie suivant la tradition fonctionnaliste et suivant la perspective plus radicale du marxisme et du féminisme. Roberta Hamilton considère que l'examen de ces différents points de vue permet une plus grande variété de questions sur le sujet, car le champ d'intérêt serait réduit si la perspective radicale était tenue à l'écart. En ce moment, Roberta Hamilton consacre principalement son intérêt personnel à l'étude des relations entre l'Eglise, l'Etat et la famille au Québec.

Susan Russell, dont la thèse de doctorat portait sur l'étude de la socialisation du rôle de sexes dans une école secondaire à Ottawa, donne un cours sur la sociologie du rôle des sexes. Bien que son cours soit basé sur des recherches empiriques multiculturelles, historiques et contemporaines, elle prête une attention particulière à l'aspect théorique—marxiste, féministe et socialiste-féministe—du caractère patriarcal de la société. Susan Russell essaye de déterminer l'intérêt des différents points de vue, en tant qu'ils contribuent à expliquer de façon valable la sociologie ou le rôle des sexes. Il est clair que le point de vue conservateur, selon lequel, la situation doit demeurer telle qu'elle est, n'aide en rien; et le point de vue libéral, qui feint d'ignorer le conflit des classes ainsi que le conflit entre les hommes et les femmes, et qui estime que la situation va s'améliorant, n'a pas, non plus, de valeur réelle. Qu'en est-il alors des optiques plus radicales? Susan Russell reproche au point de vue féministe de porter sur le système de reproduction de la femme la responsabilité de son oppression car, à son avis, cela ne doit plus entrer en ligne de cause. Elle reproche au point de vue marxiste de ne pas prendre en considération de nombreux aspects de la différenciation des pouvoirs entre les hommes et les femmes. De plus, elle dénonce les lacunes d'une analyse, où la sexualité est étudiée à partir d'une conception d'homme, dans une société

dominée par l'homme. Pour elle, le meilleur moyen de faire une analyse serait d'utiliser le point de vue marxiste allié au point de vue féministe.

Melissa Clarke a donné des cours sur la famille et la sociologie de la femme, et son cours de cette année s'intitule **Classes et Structures de l'Inégalité sociale**. Une section de ce cours traite particulièrement des problèmes relatifs aux sexes et aux classes sociales. Elle se sert de l'analyse marxiste, car elle trouve inadéquate la méthode traditionnelle libérale qui considère le milieu, l'éducation et l'occupation des femmes. Cette méthode définit l'inégalité en termes de statistiques fédérales. Melissa Clarke tend à examiner la relation qui existe entre la question de la femme et la question de classes. C'est à dire le rapport entre la femme et la productivité. Ainsi, elle examine le travail non-rétribué de la femme au foyer, en relation avec son travail hors de la maison. Elle se pose d'abord la question suivante: — Les femmes constituent-elles une classe à part et possèdent-elles une conscience de classe différente de celle de leur famille ou de leur mari? Sa réponse est négative car la distinction des femmes en classes sociale a été historiquement contracarrée. Puis elle considère le phénomène des femmes confinées au foyer et se demande quelle sorte de changement de structure sociale serait nécessaire pour qu'elles fassent partie de la force productive ou, en d'autres termes, comment les femmes pourraient-elles maintenir leur position au foyer de telle sorte que leur travail puisse être considéré au même titre que celui des hommes?

Melissa Clarke traite du préjugé sociologique (émanant des hommes) selon lequel les femmes seraient conservatrices et moins portées que les hommes à agir politiquement ou socialement pour acquérir des droits. Ce genre d'analyse se base sur des études qui font des distinctions arbitraires entre les questions de classes et les questions émotives et décrivent invariablement la lutte menée par les hommes comme une lutte de classes et celle menée par les femmes comme purement émotive. Il ne fait pas de doute qu'à cause de leur rôle dans la famille, les femmes sont moins libres d'agir. Elles occupent une position sociale circonscrite, et ceci, en plus du fait qu'elles n'ont pas d'emploi, est une contrainte à leur expression politique sur les questions de classes. L'analyse traditionnelle multi-dimensionnelle du statut de la femme prend pour point de

suite à la page 8

CEGEPs cont. from p.3

There has been a similar evolution of Women's Studies on Vanier's larger Ste-Croix Campus. Seven courses are presently offered in Psychology, Sociology, Humanities, and English. An exciting new course added this year is designed to present a wide range of background information on women's role in Canadian society, the contemporary situation and its possible alternatives. The approach is interdisciplinary and the course is team-taught by faculty from five areas.

The Women's Studies Committee has also organized symposia on subjects like women alone, rape, and birth control, as well as faculty seminars. It is now seeking an attestation which would permit Women's Studies to be listed as a field of concentration on transcripts.

Every anglophone CEGEP now offers some courses in Women's Studies. John Abbott offers two courses in literature, as well as courses in both Humanities and Sociology. "Male and Female", taught by two faculty members, has had particularly good response, and six sections are generally offered each semester.

Champlain College (Longueuil Campus) offers "Women in India" and "Sociology of Sex Roles". Ellie Malus, who teaches the latter course also leads a small group of women students, and Rosemary Sullivan in Student Services has been active in providing workshops and other activities for women. At Lennoxville Campus there are two courses, one in Literature and a Humanities course on the status and role of women.

Dawson College offers a variety of courses on all campuses in Humanities and English, and a course on Women and Art at the Lafontaine Campus. Also on the Lafontaine Campus several workshops for mothers and daughters have been offered both to students and to women in the community. At Lafontaine Campus, there is a Women's Centre where students organize activities such as speakers and workshops on Stress, Rape, Sexuality, and Wen-do.

The New School of Dawson usually offers two classes in Women's Studies per semester. Here the emphasis is on developing courses which reflect students' needs and interests. Some students go beyond a theoretical approach, and in their second year become involved in a more advanced group which is geared to social action related to women's problems. As well, the New School attempts to integrate a Women's Studies perspective into other aspects of the curriculum, such as courses in Literature, Sociology, Psychology, History, Anthropology and Fine Arts.

The Continuing Education Department of Dawson offers both credit and non-credit courses, as well as special programs for women in the community. Mature women who may wish to return to school or work,

perhaps after many years at home, have the opportunity to brush up on such things as "Basic Study Skills", and "Starting Again with Math". A non-credit course focuses on "Women in a Changing World". Four all-day workshops are planned for women on four consecutive Wednesdays this month (including free baby-sitting for the day). These workshops deal with such topics as "Making Ends Meet" and "From Mom to School or Job: Making the Transition".

I do not have statistics for enrollment in Women's Studies courses over all the anglophone CEGEPs at my fingertips, but at Vanier, with which I am most familiar, courses are typically very well enrolled. The Snowdon Campus has approximately 200 students in Women's Studies courses per semester. Many take more than one course, and some will no doubt be stimulated to find their way to the Simone de Beauvoir Institute when they apply to university. For further information please call me at: Vanier College (Snowdon Campus), 333-4027.

Joanne Morgan



Prof. Audrey Bruné at one of the "Dialogues in Depth" earlier this year.



The "Dialogues in Depth" series of last year was well attended by women and men.

K. Waters cont. from p.4

to feel quite positive about my work. I began to think in terms of having a career."

Women's Studies began at Loyola at the same time it was introduced at Sir George. A course called Women in Modern Society coordinated by Margaret Anderson was

started "...the way a lot of new things start. They brought it in in the evening, and of course it was so successful they changed it to the day and then it grew." Katherine contributed to it with lectures on women writers and from there offered her own first course on Women in Literature (1971). She had no difficulty in introducing women's literature courses. Her chairmen at the time were completely non-sexist, she claims, and by the end of the sixties there was a predominance of women in the English Department. She and the second woman hired at Loyola, however, shared the same office with a herpetologist, she remembers delightedly. "I guess they thought we were three strange specimens that should go together! He didn't keep the snakes in the office, though he did bring them in once or twice."

Katherine observes the Institute at this phase of its development with amazement and satisfaction. "I think it's been incredible," she says. "I'll never forget...it was less than two weeks before the Institute opened. I don't know what was going on in the others' heads at that time, but I just couldn't believe that this thing was going to produce! Who would do what, how things would fall into place, and whether things that were on paper would take any shape. It was a step in the dark."

"I think it really has succeeded, though there are things that need to be worked on a good deal more. I think it will make an enormous difference when Women's Studies comes into the Institute. One of the lovely things there is that you're not always looking for the 'expert' figure. It's wonderful the way people have discovered that they have their own resources. I think for everybody that's what has been most satisfying."

She feels that tutor functions should be more academic. There will be personal counselling, but exploration of the student's academic goals is very important. Important to her as well is that the university's administration eventually recognize the scope and effort involved in the tutorial commitment. In her view this is an interdisciplinary academic activity which should get the same recognition as research and publishing. "One cannot be doing both; one or the other to some extent has to be sacrificed."

"We've worked well together at the Institute. When something needs to be done, we don't tend to feel that's not our job. It's almost the opposite in some ways. I think women still feel guilty and find it very difficult to say no. Anybody can make me do anything by making me feel guilty," she sighs. "I think my generation will always be in transition."

As summer approaches, Katherine looks forward to the old family cottage in Maine where she can enjoy the fishing and boating that are her passion. Friends will come and stay in the relaxed and casual way that she loves, and there will be time to read and perhaps to write... an oasis in the life of this dynamic woman.

Marion Patterson

Sociology cont. from p.5

of the marxist position allied to aspects of the feminist position.

Melissa Clarke has taught courses on the family and the sociology of women and this year taught a course called **Class and Structured Social Inequality**. A section of this course deals specifically with problems related to sex and class. She uses a marxist analysis since she finds the liberal traditional manner which looks at status, education and occupation quite inadequate. It supplies a definition of inequality in terms of Federal statistics. She wants to examine the relationship of women to the question of class (i.e. the relationship to the means of production) and so she looks at unpaid work in the home in relationship to women's work outside the home. She first asks the question, are women a separate class and do they have class consciousness different from that of their families or husbands? Her view is that they don't because their separation is historically contrived. She then looks at the phenomenon of women confined to the home and asks what kind of social structural change would be necessary for them to participate in the work force. In other words, how could women maintain their position in the home in a way that would enable them to participate on an equal basis with men?

Clarke deals with the sociological bias (male-oriented) that women are conservative and less likely than men to act politically or socially to gain rights. This kind of analysis is based on studies which make arbitrary distinctions between class issues and emotive issues, and invariably describe men's struggles as class-based and women's as purely emotional. There is no doubt that women, because of their position in the family, are more restrained. They are placed in a circumscribed social existence, and this, in addition to their not having access to jobs, is a structural constraint on their political expression of

class issues. The traditional multi-dimensional analysis of status starts from the vantage point of women's situation as given and develops its analysis from there. It is therefore wholly unable to untangle the socially contrived from the essential. In order to get at the roots of women's oppression, Clarke says, as class analysis is crucial.

Susan Drysdale has been teaching a course called **The Sociology of Women** since 1970. The course has always included a sociological examination of the status of women from historical, cross-cultural and contemporary perspectives, but the focus of the course has become more specific with the increase in Women's Studies courses during the decade. At present the emphasis is on: (a) the socialization of women and family roles; (b) women and work; (c) education and (d) ideology and social control. In accounting for the historical position of women in society, different theoretical analyses of women (including those of de Beauvoir, Beard, Marx, Engels and Veblen) are examined, as well as their critics. Topical sections involve the study of traditional sociological research and critical feminist analysis.

To understand the multifaceted existence of women in society, Drysdale said, it is imperative to examine economic, political, social and cultural institutions. While scrutinizing the economic constraints which define women's options in society, for example, one must understand the cultural structure, that is, the values and beliefs which, in various legal, religious, moral and ideological forms, enormously affect the thinking and behaviour of women and men. One can examine not only the relation of sex roles and the division of labor, the determinants of authority and power in the family and the issue of woman's subordinate position in the marriage relationship. As well, one can examine the sociological problem of the meaning of motherhood, the significance of the family and the experiential interconnection between woman's experience

as wife and mother and her non-familial roles in society. Questions explored include: What are the sociological manifestations of biological differences between the sexes? What is women's current participation in the labour force? Who works where and why? How are employment and housework interrelated? What is the situation of the fulltime housewife? What are the problems of the unpaid and unrecognized labour of women which is crucial for the functioning of society? How do class, age, race and ethnicity structure women's problems and alternatives in society? How is women's power and influence defined and limited by ideology, cultural images and mechanisms of social control? The answers to such questions are complex and lead to an exposure of critical problems in the lives of modern women and men. These explorations generate proposed solutions such as wages and/or pensions for housework; the industrialization of housework; the redefinition of parental roles and responsibilities; alterations in educational and vocational training; alternate forms of marriage and families, childlessness and so on. Their ramifications must be understood in historical and social context. What is meant in the call for the radical transformation of society? Will social reforms or alternate lifestyles resolve or mollify the conflicts between the sexes? If enduring alterations in the present situation are not forthcoming, what then?

"In our utilization of distinct theoretical perspectives to understand woman's place", Drysdale concluded, "we must appreciate the range of positions, and their respective explanatory value and implications. No single current model or theory will give us the answers we yearn for. No array of technical contraptions or proposals will resolve the problems we face. But we try to build a new perspective, a new way of understanding social reality, which will precipitate new sociological postures and creative social change."

Dana Hearne

Subscriptions

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute Newsletter is a quarterly. Annual subscription rates are: Institution \$10.00, Individual \$6.00, Student \$4.00. For subscriptions please address Greta Nemiroff, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd., W. Montréal, Québec.

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Events

We will publish notices of events of interest to women. Send your announcements to the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montréal H3G 1M8.

JUNE 20: There will be an extraordinary meeting of the **General Assembly** of the Institute at 7:00pm in the downtown building at 2170 Bishop Street. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss proposed changes of the Institute's structures.

POWERHOUSE is organizing an exhibition of "**Women's Bookworks**" for October '79. Canadian women artists working in this new / old medium are invited to submit their work. These books can be unique works or small editions, hand-made or offset printed, stamped, folded, bound, stapled, xeroxed, silk-screened, or etched. We are looking for the ways in which the basic concept of a book, an idea or ideas expressed in a sequence of pages between covers, is being developed as an art form. The exhibition will be held at Powerhouse from October 1 to 20. The deadline for submissions of work is August 10. For application forms, please write to:

**Women's Bookworks,
Powerhouse Gallery
3738 St. Dominique
Montréal, P.Q.
H2X 2X8**

The Women at INCO

One of the most important factors in the recently settled nine month long INCO strike in Sudbury has been the active participation of the workers' wives. Traditionally, wives bear the brunt of the labour struggles in their efforts to make ends meet on meagre strike pay. In the past, they have often been uninformed of the issues and processes of collective bargaining. However, in Sudbury the wives of the workers formed the highly active and visible Wives Supporting the Strike Committee. Their vital role in the strike has won them great respect from their husbands, the community, the union, and the women's movement. It has given them new confidence in their own abilities to organize and to participate in trade-union affairs. Many of them are questioning their traditional roles as wives and mothers.

An hour-long colour film is being made as a collective effort by some Sudbury women and three Montréal film-makers, Martin Duckworth (a part-time instructor at Concordia), Joyce Rock and Sophie Bissonnette. The shooting of the film is well underway, but there is a great need for money. While applications are being made for grants, almost \$20,000 must be raised from private sources. Any con-

tributions are welcome and tax deductible. They should be sent to:

**Wives Supporting the Strike Fund,
"Development Education Centre",
121 Avenue Road,
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2G3
(receipts will be sent)**

For information please contact:

**Joyce Rock,
3833 Berri,
Montréal, Québec
H2L 4H2
(514) 843-4568**

Sociologie suite de la p.5

départ la situation donnée—faussée a priori—et se développe à partir de là. Par conséquent, il lui est totalement impossible de distinguer les affirmations fallacieuses du caractère essentiel de la femme. Une analyse de classes est primordiale, écrit Melissa Clarke, pour aller à la source de l'oppression des femmes.

Susan Drysdale donne, depuis 1970, un cours intitulé **La Sociologie de la Femme**. Ce cours a toujours porté sur l'examen du statut de la femme, à partir des perspectives historiques, multi-culturelles et contemporaines. Mais avec l'accroissement, depuis ce temps, du nombre de cours, Susan Drysdale a reformulé son cours initial et a mis l'accent sur les points suivants: a) la socialisation de la femme et le rôle de la famille; b) la femme et le travail; c) l'éducation; d) l'idéologie et le contrôle social.

En tenant compte de la situation historique des femmes dans la société, on étudie les analyses théoriques qui ont été faites sur ce sujet, dont celles de Beauvoir, Beard, Marx, Engels et Veblen, et de leurs critiques.

Afin de comprendre les nombreuses facettes qui caractérisent leur existence, il est impératif d'examiner les institutions économiques, politiques, sociales et culturelles. Par exemple, pendant qu'on étudie les contraintes économiques qui définissent les choix des femmes dans la société, on doit connaître la structure culturelle, c'est à dire les valeurs et les croyances qui, sous les formes les plus variées, soit légales, religieuses, morales et idéologiques, affectent énormément la

pensée et le comportement des hommes aussi bien que des femmes. Non seulement peut-on y voir la relation entre le rôle des sexes et la division du travail—les déterminants de l'autorité et du pouvoir dans la famille et les causes de la subordination de la femme dans le mariage—mais encore le problème sociologique du sens de la maternité, de la signification de la famille et du lien existant entre l'expérience de la femme-épouse et mère et son rôle non-familial dans la société. Les questions posées sont, entre autres:— Quelles sont les manifestations sociologiques des différences biologiques entre les sexes? Quelle est la participation actuelle de la femme dans la force productive? Où travaille-t-elle et pourquoi? Quelle est la relation entre le travail au foyer et hors du foyer? Quelle est la situation de la femme au foyer à plein temps? Quels sont les problèmes du travail non-rétribué et non-reconnu de la femme au foyer qui est crucial au fonctionnement de la société? Comment les problèmes de classes, d'âge, de race et d'ethnie circonscrivent-ils la femme et ses choix dans la société? Comment le pouvoir et l'influence des femmes sont-ils définis et limités par l'idéologie, les mécanismes et les stéréotypes culturels du contrôle social? Les réponses à de telles questions sont complexes et mènent au dévoilement de problèmes critiques dans le vie des femmes et des hommes d'aujourd'hui. Les découvertes que en résultent amènent des solutions possibles, soit: un salaire ou une pension pour les femmes au foyer; l'industrialisation du travail au foyer; la redéfinition du rôle et des responsabilités des parents; le remaniement de l'enseignement classique et professionnel; une alternative au mariage et à la famille traditionnelle; des couples sans enfants, etc. Les ramifications de ces solutions doivent être comprises dans un contexte historique et social. Qu'attend-on du changement radical de la société? Les réformes sociales ou les modes de vie différents sauront-ils résoudre ou apaiser les conflits entre les sexes? Si la situation présente ne subit pas de changements durables, que fait-on alors?

"Lorsque nous étudions les différentes perspectives théoriques pour comprendre la situation de la femme", conclut Susan Drysdale, "nous devons considérer le grand nombre de théories qui nous sont offertes, leur clarté et leur portée respectivement. Il n'existe pas, présentement, de modèle ou de théorie unique susceptible de nous fournir la réponse que nous souhaitons. Il n'existe pas, non plus, de dispositifs techniques pour résoudre les problèmes auxquels nous devons faire face. Mais nous essayons de créer une nouvelle perspective, un nouveau moyen de comprendre la réalité sociale qui va hâter la formation de nouvelles attitudes en sociologie et un changement social valable."

Traduit par Liliane Pollak

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